



**SILC Meeting  
October 29-30, 2015  
Helena, MT**

**Members Present:** Monique Casbeer, Jim Brown, Astghik Iknatian, Karen Underwood, Lori Gaustad, Dick Trerise, Michelle Williams, Tom Osborn, Robin Idol, June Hermanson, Rosemary Hughes (excused Thursday, present Friday)

**Members Excused:** Mary Olson

**Members Absent:** Kaitlyn Kovich

**Staff:** Bill Harant, Peggy Williams, Mary Taylor

**Guests:** Mike Mayer, Mary Westwood

The meeting was opened at 1:23 PM by Monique Casbeer. After introductions and welcoming comments the August minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

**DETD Update:** Peggy Williams provided an update on Disability Employment and Transitions Division (DETD) activities. She began by speaking about what DETD was doing to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Notices of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) have been published for some areas of WIOA, but those governing independent living (IL) have not. With the addition of the 5<sup>th</sup> core service concerning transitions having been added by WIOA, DETD has been working with the schools in the state to implement PETS (Pre-employment Transition Services). Contracts are being written that will vary on the size of the school. So far 20 contracts have been written. The Rural Institute has also been contracted for technical assistance.

MSU–Billings has been contracted to host Moving On, which will focus on transitioning from high school to college and beyond. MSU–Billings has also been contracted to mentor youth aged 18-24 and out of high school in Red Lodge.

VR is holding Town Hall meetings around the state (Helena, Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula) to discuss WIOA changes as it prepares the unified state plan. VR has also opened order of selection due to budget constraints.

Jim Marks sent out a letter this week announcing a restructuring of VR. The regional system that has been in operation will be replaced with a more centralized system. No one

will lose their job, however there will be a shifting of some positions. Bill will forward more information to the council later.

A question was asked about how school districts will be compensated through PETS contracts. Peggy stated that compensation will be made based on the size of the school district. Another question was asked regarding Co-Ops. These are being considered but contracts for them will require an RFP. June mentioned that work plans will be placed on the state website. She also offered to put info on the MY Transitions website. One difficulty that exists with PETS and transitions is that Montana is one of only 2 states that do not offer education assistance until 21. In Montana the limit is 19. Members are encouraged to advocate for a change in state law to bring the state in line with the majority of other states in this regard.

**Budget:** The division is in the process of closing out FY 15 budgets. All of the General Fund moneys have been spent. The Part B part of the budget is awaiting some invoices yet before it can be closed out. Social Security and Section 110 funds have also been fully expended. Contracts have been sent out to the CILs and most have been signed and returned. There was a surplus in the SILC budget which was given to the CILs in the amount of \$5,000 each which needed to be spent by September 30. Shortly before the end of the fiscal year we were informed by fiscal that the IL budget was being billed for \$3,791.58 in indirect costs for audit expenses by the Quality Assurance Division. DETD budget analysts are appealing this expense which, if not resolved will result in a need to find an offset to the general fund. There is also a concern as to how this will affect the 5% cap on administrative costs mandated by WIOA.

**SILC Business:** Bill continues to participate in meetings with Money Follows the Person (MFP) Supported Employment Leadership Network (SELN), Joining Community Forces (JCF) etc. MFP is continuing to meet its milestones and benchmarks. The Steering Committee is meeting today so Bill couldn't provide an update on their exact figures but will provide that information as soon as he gets it. SELN is working on updating their career plans and waiver definitions. JCF had a successful symposium and veteran's career fair and stand down in August.

Site reviews were conducted at NCILS and Summit. Both went very well. Each of these centers are meeting or exceeding the national standards that were used during the reviews. NCILS will also be undergoing an audit by the Quality Assurance Division prior to year's end.

Bill questioned whether there was a need to change the bylaws, Article III, Sec. 2b regarding the requirement that there be a Section 121 Native American representative on the council since this is no longer a federal requirement. It was noted that a 10 day notice needs to be given before any changes to the bylaws are voted on. The consensus of the council was that consideration should be given to reflect that there remains a need to have

a Native American voice on the council. It was suggested that the Section 121 directors be consulted before any changes to the bylaws are made. Bill will draft a proposal for the Sec. 121 directors.

**ASPIRE:** Contracts with CILS and others have been completed. There are 3 case workers in the state for the program. They along with Mary Taylor, APSIRE Program Manager have been busy traveling the state, participating in conference calls and other meetings to promote ASPIRE and sign up participants. This involves collaboration with other agencies both in state and out of state. Training is being developed for sub-contractors. Mary hopes that they will have full enrollment by March, 2016. The study ends in 2018.

**VR Council:** Tom reported that the labor report shows that there will be more jobs than seekers in 10 years. This will necessitate better communications to be developed to provide more info and sharing between employers and job seekers with disabilities.

**NCIL:** no report

**MYLF:** 21 youth participated in the forum this year. Recruiting has begun for next year. The leadership team chosen by the delegates at this year's forum attended the APRIL conference in South Carolina where they met with peers from other states.

**Montana Youth Transitions:** 255 have registered for this year's conference, 71 of which are youth. During the conference 2 soft skills academies will be presented for the youth in attendance. Sub-contracts for the conference have been sent out. The conference will be much the same as last year with the emphasis on soft skills training. At last year's conference 30 parents attended. More are expected this year.

**APRIL Conference:** The youth part of the conference was expanded this year. There were 2 sessions on education, 1 on transportation and 1 on relationships, in addition to a lot of discussion regarding WIOA.

## **CIL Reports**

**LIFTT:** Mary Westwood, LIFTT Board President reported that the search for the new Executive Director is progressing, with interviews beginning next week. They have a number of very good candidates. Mary has been filling in and has been learning a lot about day to day operations. They have been encouraging Peers to be part of events and presentations. Regular classes are being maintained. Otherwise things are moving along as normal.

**MILP:** No representative was present to provide a report.

**NCILS:** Tom reported that the current Living Well with a Disability Class is about to finish. It has gone well. NCILS will participate in Meet Your Legislator Luncheons on November 10 and January 4. There has been some staff turnover recently, but they seem to be blending in well. NCILS will be involved in a project in Havre to assess various community events access. They are working with other agencies on this. In December they are presenting a mini summit on the History and Culture of Disabilities to 2 schools in Great Falls, and one in Glasgow. They hope to be able to move this into schools on a regular basis and involve teachers in the program. NCILS is working with LIFTT to cross develop the program for use in central Montana counties.

**SUMMIT I.L.C.:** Mike reported that they have completed development of their new 3 year plan. They are working with local schools in collaboration on youth transitions. BALLS classes have been integrated into several area schools curriculum and are going well. Summit has participated in town hall meetings in Kalispell to develop a Community Engagement Initiative. The University of New Hampshire is assisting with this. It is hoped that this will identify barriers in the community and find ways to remove them. Summit is also working with the Rural Institute on a project with youth to present a variety show in November at the Crystal Theater in Missoula. People of all abilities are being encouraged to participate. Living Well classes are going well with one starting in Columbia Falls this coming Tuesday. All other activities are also progressing well. In Hamilton Summit has opened the Refuge in a building across the street from their offices. It will provide opportunities to work with other community organizations and schools. One class being offered there will be on financial education put on by the Bitterroot Financial Collation.

**Public Comments:** No public comments were offered.

## **Committee Reports**

**Competitive Integrated Employment:** A survey is being developed for supported employment providers/employers. It will be placed on the Survey Monkey account. The initial group to be surveyed will be those employers holding 14(c) certificates. A question was asked about the meaning of competitive integrated employment. Tom explained that competitive means that a wage has to be competitive within the regular rate for an occupation. Integrated means that the work population can't be segregated, everybody works together.

**Education and Public Relations:** The brochures have been printed (1000 copies) and are being distributed.

**Consumer Satisfaction – Needs Assessment Survey:** The survey is almost complete. It will be printed and also offered on Survey Monkey in an attempt to encourage more participation.

The meeting ended for the day at 4:30 PM.

Monique reopened the meeting at 8:40 AM

## **Task Force Reports**

**Self Determination:** Meets every other Wednesday at 1:30. The next meeting will be November 4. A 3 year plan is being developed which will address DD waivers, employment, community settings and other issues.

**Transportation:** The task force has been communicating with Montana Dept. of Transportation regarding Trans Aide. The vehicle registration fee legislation will be transferred to the rental car tax. Fund will be sent out based on need and will be allotted to counties to improve transportation access. On November 10 or 11 there will be a meeting with MDT Director Tooley regarding transportation funding.

**Legislative Advocacy:** They are discussing surveying recipients of home and community based services (HBCS). The state is supposed to be doing this but is not doing so effectively. Transportation issues have also been discussed as they apply to CMS regulations. Regarding the survey the task force would like to approach the SILC for assistance with a survey of consumers in long term care regarding transportation services.

**Community Living:** No report.

**Native American:** Michelle reported that this committee is not currently active. They need to find members, Native or non-Native, i.e. members do not need to be enrolled members of a tribe. This being said Michelle stated that they would like to create a focused brochure to promote IL services to the Native American communities. Dick suggested that Michelle contact Mike Jetty for input. SILC members suggested several individuals who might be interested in the task force. Peggy asked whether Michelle had been in contact with VR and Mike Hermanson in particular. Michelle stated that she had contacted Chanda Hermanson-Dudley.

Monique asked for a motion to pay for the printing of the brochure. The motion was moved and seconded with an amendment to keep costs within \$100 of the printing costs of the SILC brochure. Further discussion was held regarding photos of Native American people on the brochure. The amended motion was moved and seconded and subsequently approved by the SILC.

The remainder of the meeting was taken up by a review of the current SPIL Objectives and Goals. To aid in this discussion an archived webinar from ILRU on SPIL development was presented.

It was observed that overall the goals and objective are either being met or have been completed. One objective regarding canvassing legislative candidates about IL issues has been removed as it conflicted with state regulations.

Upon completion of the SPIL review, the meeting was declared closed at 2:30. The next meeting is scheduled for January 28-29, 2016.